



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

For immediate release: July 15, 2005 (05-31)
Contact: Joe Hoffman (360) 902-2048
Mike Louisell (360) 902-1813

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, Washington 98504-2560
Visit our Web site at: agr.wa.gov

Collection sites near Elma, Raymond, Long Beach, Vancouver and Centralia

Sign up by Aug. 1 for free pesticide disposal at the Southwest Washington Obsolete Pesticide Round-Up

OLYMPIA — Are there old or unusable pesticide products on your property or at your workplace? If several years have passed since you last used a product or you have discovered old products left behind by a previous property owner, consider proper disposal or recycling before they become a financial liability or a possible threat to human and animal health.

Farmers, residents, business owners and public agencies can safely dispose of old or unusable agricultural and commercial grade pesticides without paying hazardous waste disposal fees at five collection events that will be held in August and September in Southwest Washington.

The events are sponsored by the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) in cooperation with local agencies and businesses.

The Southwest Washington Obsolete Pesticide Round-Up includes collection events near Elma on Aug. 22, Raymond on Aug. 23, Long Beach on Aug. 24, Vancouver on Sept. 13, and Centralia on Sept. 14. To participate, you need to sign up by Aug. 1.

Customer sign up by Aug. 1 is requested to allow time for WSDA personnel to process disposal inventory information, obtain necessary permits, and provide customers with any pre-event assistance. Customers will receive directions to the collection site, hours of operation and transportation documents. To sign up, call (360) 902-2056, toll free (877) 301-4555 or send e-mail to wastepesticide@agr.wa.gov.

Pesticides accepted by WSDA include insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, rodenticides and most chemicals that kill, repel or prevent unwanted pests. Empty containers and other waste, such as fertilizers, motor oil and household hazardous waste are not accepted for disposal by WSDA's program. To dispose or recycle these other items, contact your local solid waste or environmental health program. You can also find recycling contacts and disposal opportunities by using the Earth 911 internet service. Their Web site, www.earth911.org, provides local resource information anywhere in the U.S. by entering a zip code and following the instructions.

Customers transport unwanted pesticides to the collection site where WSDA takes possession of them and a hazardous waste contractor packs them for safe and legal transportation and disposal.

Customer names do not appear on manifests or disposal documents. "We are responsible for the pesticides once we take possession of them," program coordinator Joe Hoffman said. "We become the owner of the pesticides before they are turned over to the contractor. By becoming the owner of the pesticides, WSDA

MORE

and our hazardous waste contractor assume any future long-term liability. That is significant because owners of hazardous materials are usually responsible for life for the cost of disposal or any environmental cleanup that may be needed should a transportation accident or disposal site release occur.”

Leaky containers or improper pesticide disposal may create serious health problems for humans and animals, contaminate drinking water supplies or cause significant environmental damage. It is also very expensive and difficult to clean up contaminated soil or water. These problems can be prevented by proper disposal of pesticides that are no longer needed. WSDA will provide customers with supplies necessary to protect broken or leaky containers to ensure safe transportation to the collection site.

“Our program may not get a lot of media attention, but the prevention aspect of our successes should not be overlooked.” Hoffman added. “With proper disposal, you won’t read the newspaper article about someone’s grandchild who was poisoned by the parathion (insecticide) can under the tarp in the back of the shed, because it’s no longer there. You also won’t read about the widow needing to sell the property to pay the clean-up and disposal bill for the pesticide ‘museum’ her deceased husband left behind, because she took advantage of the free disposal offer and all of her pesticides were properly disposed.”

The WSDA program also provides a disposal opportunity for persons who are quitting business or selling property and are stuck with pesticides they will never use. In some cases, a storage room containing pesticides can delay a property transaction.

WSDA has sponsored pesticide collection events since 1988. Through this program, more than 5,300 customers have properly disposed of more than 1.7 million pounds of waste pesticides.

In addition to calling or using e-mail to sign up for the Pesticide Round-Up, you may write to the Waste Pesticide Program, Washington State Department of Agriculture, PO Box 42589, Olympia, WA 98504-2589. For more information, visit WSDA’s Web site at <http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/Pesticides/WastePesticide.htm>.

###